

"He that judgeth a matter before he heareth it is not wise."

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THE ONLY WAY TO BE SAVED.

BY

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THERE are certain principles established by God which, being understood and observed, will put men in possession of spiritual knowledge, gifts, and blessings. In early ages of the world, also in the days of the apostles, people came into possession of spiritual powers and various privileges, by obtaining an understanding of, and faithfully attending to, certain rules which the Lord established: as for instance, Abel, obtaining information that offering up sacrifices was an order instituted of God through which men might receive blessings, he set himself to work, observed the order, and performed the sacrifice, whereby he obtained glorious manifestations of the Most High. Again, when the Antediluvians had corrupted themselves, and the time arriving at which destruction was coming upon them, the Lord revealed a course whereby the righteous might escape; accordingly all who understood and observed that course were sure to realize the blessing promised. Joshua, before obtaining possession of Jericho, had to observe certain steps appointed of God. The steps having been properly taken according to commandment, the object immediately fell into his possession. Another instance, the case of Naaman, captain of the Assyrian host; it appears that being afflicted with the leprosy, and hearing of Elisha the prophet, he made application to him for the removal of that affliction. The prophet, having the Holy Ghost upon him—which is the mind of God—informed him that by washing in Jordan's waters seven times he might be restored. At first Naaman thought this too simple, and was displeased and disposed not to conform—not to make use of means so simple. After due consideration, however, humbling himself, he went forth complying with the rules; when lo! the blessing directly followed. Under the Mosaic dispensation, forgiveness of sins was obtained upon the same principles as those blessings were to which I have alluded. An animal was to be carried before the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation by the individual wishing to obtain forgiveness of sins; it was then to be offered up in a particular manner; this being done the promised blessing immediately followed.

When the Gospel dispensation was introduced, gifts and blessings were obtained upon similar principles; that is, upon obedience to certain established rules. The Lord still marked out certain acts, promising to all those who would do them certain peculiar privileges; and when those acts were performed—observed in every particular—then the blessings promised were sure to be realized. Some vainly imagine that under the Gospel dispensation gifts and blessings are obtained, not by external

observances or external works, but merely through faith and repentance, through mental operations, independent of physical. But, laying aside the traditions, superstitions, and creeds of men, we will look to the word of God, where we shall discover that external works or outward ordinances, under the Gospel dispensation were inseparably connected with inward works, such as faith and repentance. In proof of this I introduce the following observations:—The Saviour says, “Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” Again, He says, “He that heareth my words and doeth them shall be likened unto a man that built his house upon a rock.” And, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” Likewise, He says, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”—John iii, 5. These sayings of our Saviour require men to perform external works in order to receive their salvation.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter says to the surrounding multitude, “Repent and be baptized, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” In this prophetic statement we learn that people were to perform an external work (baptism in water) in order that they might receive the remission of sins, and afterwards the gift of the Holy Ghost. But, before attending to the outward work, the inward work must be performed—faith and repentance. Faith and repentance go before baptism, and baptism before the remission of sins and the reception of the Holy Ghost. Hence we see the useless and unscriptural practice of baptizing infants. They cannot exercise faith and repentance, qualifications necessary previous to baptism; then, why require the outward work?

Some deem it wrong to number baptism among the essential principles ordained of God, to be attended to in obtaining remission of sins. In reply we say that the Saviour and apostles have done so before us; therefore we feel obligated to follow their example. The destruction of the Antediluvian world by water was typical of receiving remission of sins through baptism. The earth had become clothed with sin as with a garment; the righteous were brought out and saved from the world of sin, even by water; the like figure, even baptism, doth now save us, says Peter (1 Peter iii, 21), by the answer of “a good conscience toward God.” Noah and his family were removed and disconnected from sins and pollutions, by means of water; so baptism, the like figure, doth now remove our souls from sins and pollutions, through faith on the great atonement upon Calvary. Many express surprise that such blessings should be had through baptism. Naaman, when told to wash in Jordan seven times, was equally surprised; but, trying the experiment, he found the word of God to be true; his leprosy, his physical pollution, was thereby removed, and was typical of the removal of spiritual pollutions in the Gospel dispensation, by baptism in water, through faith and repentance. Through the means of water Naaman, we have seen, obtained a miraculous blessing; also the blind man, whom the Saviour directed to wash in the pool of Siloam, received his sight by means of water.

The Saviour, after coming out of the river Jordan, received the Holy Ghost. These examples show clearly that water has been appointed a medium through which heavenly blessings are obtained. Be baptized,

says Peter, for the remission of sin (Acts ii, 38). Ananias says to Saul (Acts xxii, 16), Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins. In the city of Samaria the people baptized by Philip, it is said, rejoiced. They rejoiced because of the remission of their sins, through baptism; so also in the case of the eunuch (Acts viii, 39), after coming out of the water, having obtained remission of his sins, his conscience becoming void of offence toward God, he was enabled to go on his way rejoicing.

Some suppose they must obtain religion before they are baptized; but the Saviour and apostles teach us to be baptized in order to get religion. Be baptized, says Peter, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost. To obtain the gift of the Holy Ghost is to obtain religion. Faith and repentance were to go before baptism; but remission of sins and gift of the Holy Ghost were to follow this ordinance. Every unprejudiced mind can see that this is in perfect agreement with the saying of our Saviour, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God." If religion were promised before baptism in water, our Saviour would have said, born of the spirit and of water (see John iii, 5); but he said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit." "What God has joined together (the Scripture says) let no man put asunder;" but we put asunder this order of things when we say a man must be born of Spirit, then of water, or must get religion—get the Holy Ghost—and then be baptized.

Peter (Acts ii) preached the same order of things, as above mentioned, when he said, "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost;" that is, be "born of water," then ye shall be "born of Spirit." Paul himself, though he had a vision of the Lord Jesus, yet received not the Holy Ghost; he did not receive religion until he had washed his sins away through baptism, as administered by Ananias. There is one instance, and but one, where the Holy Ghost was given before baptism—I mean in the Apostolic dispensation. Cornelius and his friends, who had assembled together to hear the message from Peter, received the Holy Ghost previous to baptism (Acts x, 44). This was done, however, to convince Peter that the Gentiles had a right to receive Gospel privileges. Cornelius and his friends were Gentiles, and Peter would not have baptized them unless he had first seen the power of God resting upon them. He looked upon the Gentiles as heathen, and too wicked and sinful to receive Gospel privileges with the people of God—the Jewish nation. He did not imagine they were to receive the Holy Ghost, and thereby be prepared to sit down in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the Jewish prophets; but when he saw the Holy Ghost resting upon them, being astonished, he immediately exclaimed, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized? He then commanded them to be baptized. This receiving the Holy Ghost before baptism was an exception to a general rule, and arose from peculiar circumstances, as I have shown. God, if he sees fit, can depart from a general rule, and confer blessings; but man has not this privilege; he must observe the order laid down, or he can have no claim upon the promise. After Elisha had laid down the order whereby Naaman could obtain removal of his leprosy, God, if he had chosen, could have removed it in some other way; but, at the same time, Naaman could not have claimed the blessing until he had taken the course marked out (see 2 Kings v). If we will observe the order of the

Gospel, a promise is left us, we shall have its blessings ; otherwise, we have no claims to urge ; and it is worse than folly for men to say, "Lord, Lord," and do not his commandments.

It is plainly manifest that external works must be attended to, as well as faith and repentance, in order to receive Gospel privileges.

Baptism in water forming a part of the Gospel of Christ, we notice therefore that the servants of God in early ages were very particular in attending to its administration ; also, it is evident that unless peculiar blessings actually were experienced through baptism, they would have neglected enforcing its observance. If, as some suppose, that faith, repentance, and prayer answer the purpose in receiving the fulness of Gospel privileges, then it is very evident that baptism was a vain and useless work, and had no need to be observed. Naaman would have been performing a vain and foolish work when washing seven times in Jordan's waters had it been in his power to have been recovered from his affliction merely through faith, repentance, and prayer. Also, Noah and his family were very foolish in performing an external work, in building an ark, provided they could have obtained the same blessing through faith, repentance, and prayer. Furthermore, the Israelites, could they have obtained forgiveness of sins through faith, repentance, and prayer, it would have been folly in them to offer up animals for that purpose. So also, under the Gospel dispensation, the three thousand people on the day of Pentecost, who were baptized in one day, were very unwise and foolish in submitting to the trouble of baptism provided the same blessings could have been realized by exercising only faith, repentance, and prayer. The eunuch would not have alighted from his carriage and accompanied Philip into the water if nothing had been required in receiving Gospel blessings but inward works ; neither would Ananias have commanded Saul to arise and be baptized, washing away his sins, unless he had known assuredly that baptism, an outward work, must necessarily accompany the inward works of faith and repentance in order that Saul might come into and obtain possession of Gospel privileges. Paul would not have baptized those twelve men alluded to in Acts xix if mental operations could have given them the gift of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. i, 14) ; neither would he have baptized the household of Stephanas ; also Crispus and Gaius, and permitted Apollos to water or baptize those whom he planted or enlightened (1 Cor. iii, 6), unless baptism had been absolutely essential to receiving Gospel privileges ; nor would Peter, when speaking of Noah and family being saved by water, have said, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us" (1 Peter iii, 21) ; nor would Christ have said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." I might multiply proofs of this kind, but sufficient has already been said in proof that baptism is absolutely necessary with faith and repentance.

We will now occupy a moment in endeavouring to obtain a proper view of the mode in which baptism was administered. It is quite evident that there was but one way or mode in which this ordinance was to be administered, and that mode was explained to the apostles, and strictly adhered to in all their administrations. In order that we may obtain a proper notion of this subject it will be necessary to refer to the circumstances under which baptism was administered.

It says of John that he baptized at Ænon, because there was much water

there. Then, if sprinkling had been the mode we can hardly suppose he would have gone to Ænon because there was much water at that place; for a very little water indeed would have sprinkled all Judea, which he could have obtained without having performed a journey to Ænon. We are told, also, that he baptized in Jordan, and that after the ordinance was administered to our Saviour, he came up out of the water, expressly signifying that he had been down into the water in order that the ordinance might be administered in a proper manner. Again, it speaks of the eunuch, that he went down into the water with Philip, and then came up out of the water. Now, it must be acknowledged by every one who makes any pretensions to reason and consistency that had sprinkling a little water on the forehead answered the purpose, then those persons never would have gone into the water to receive the ordinance. Paul, in writing to the saints, gives us a plain testimony in favour of immersion—2 Col., 12th verse; also Romans vi, 4. That apostle states there that the saints had been buried with Christ by baptism.

It is plainly evident they could not have been buried by baptism without having been entirely overwhelmed or covered in water. An object cannot be said to be buried when any portion of it remains uncovered; so, also, a man is not buried in water by baptism unless his whole person is put into the watery element. This explanation of the apostle upon the mode of baptism **very** beautifully corresponds with that given by our Saviour, "Except ye be born of water," etc. To be born of a thing signifies being placed in **that** thing and emerging or coming forth from it; to be born of water **must** also signify being placed in the womb of waters and being brought forth again. I trust sufficient has already been said to convince every reasonable and unprejudiced mind that immersion was the mode in which the ordinance of baptism was administered in the early days of Christianity, when the Gospel was proclaimed in its purity and fulness; therefore I will close my observations upon this point.

We learn from Hebrews vi. that the laying on of hands was enumerated among the principles of the Gospel. It is known by all that this ordinance, as well as baptism for the remission of sins by immersion, is quite neglected at the present day in the Christian churches; a few remarks, therefore, upon this subject I hope will prove profitable. We have several instances where Christ laid his hands upon the sick and healed them; and in his commission to the apostles (last chapter of Mark) He says—These signs shall follow them that believe; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover, etc. Ananias laid his hands on Saul, who immediately received his sight after this ordinance was administered. Paul, when shipwrecked upon the island of Melita, laid his hands upon the father of Publius, the governor of the island, and healed him of a fever. These few remarks show clearly that laying on of hands has been appointed of God to be a medium through which heavenly blessings may be obtained.

Although the healing of the sick was connected with the administration of this ordinance, yet, when we pursue the subject further, we shall discover that a still greater blessing was connected with this ordinance. We are told that in the city of Samaria men and women had been baptized by Philip, which caused great rejoicing in those baptized. They probably were rejoicing in consequence of having received remission of sins through faith, repentance, and baptism, and of receiving some portion

of the Holy Spirit of God, which naturally followed them after having obtained the answer of a good conscience by the remission of their sins. Through this portion of the Holy Spirit which they came in possession of, they began to see the kingdom of God. For it will be recollected that our Saviour has declared that no man can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again ; and in the verse following He says—he cannot enter into it except he is born twice ; first of water, then of the Spirit. Now, those people at Samaria had been born of water—they had received the first birth, therefore they were in a state of seeing the kingdom of God, of contemplating with the eye of faith its various blessings, privileges, and glories ; but, as they had not been born a second time, that is, of the Spirit, they had not entered into the kingdom of God—they had not entered into possession of Gospel privileges in their fullness. When the apostles at Jerusalem heard of the success of Philip, they sent Peter and John to Samaria for the purpose of administering the laying on of hands. Accordingly, when they arrived at Samaria, they laid their hands upon those that had been baptized, and they received the Holy Ghost. Simon the sorcerer, perceiving the Holy Ghost was given through the laying of hands, offered the apostles money if they would confer upon him the authority of administering that sacred ordinance ; so it is plainly evident that those people in Samaria were born of the Spirit, were introduced into the Gospel kingdom—into possession of Gospel privileges—by means of laying on of hands. We will adduce another instance of the kind. It is found recorded in Acts xix. Paul, we are told there, found twelve brethren at Ephesus, upon whom he laid his hands, and they received the Holy Ghost immediately, viz., through this ordinance they were born spiritually into the kingdom of God ; for previous to this they had but seen the kingdom of God, having been born of water only.

This, then, was the Gospel order in the days of the apostles, belief on Jesus Christ, repentance, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost. When this order was understood and properly attended to, power, gifts, blessings, and glorious privileges followed immediately ; and in every age and period, when these steps are properly attended to, and observed in their proper place and order, the same blessings are sure to follow ; but when neglected, either wholly or in part, there will be either an entire absence of those blessings or a great diminishing of them. Christ, in his commission to the apostles, speaks of some supernatural gifts that those received who yielded obedience to this order of things (see Mark, last chapter). Paul (1 Cor. xii) gives a more full account of the various gifts that attended the fullness of the Gospel ; he mentions nine of them, and informs us they are the effects or fruits of the Holy Ghost. Now, the Holy Ghost was promised unto all, even as many as the Lord should call (see Acts ii). This gift being unchangeable in its nature and operations, and being inseparably connected by promise with this scheme or order of things, it becomes reasonable, consistent, and Scriptural to anticipate the same gifts and blessings ; and if Noah, after having built the ark, could claim and obtain his temporal salvation according to promise ; or Joshua, having compassed Jericho the number of times mentioned, could go up on her prostrated walls and make captive her inhabitants ; or the Israelites, having offered up the sacrifices commanded, could then, as promised, receive forgiveness of their sins ; or Naaman, after having

complied with the injunction of Elisha in washing seven times in Jordan's waters, could demand and obtain his recovery ; or, lastly, the blind man, after having washed in the pool of Siloam, if he could then claim and realize the promised reward, then, I say, with propriety and consistency, that whenever a man will lay aside his prejudice, sectarian notions, and false traditions, and conform to the whole order of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then there is nothing beneath the celestial world that will operate against claiming and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and all the blessings connected with the Gospel in the apostolic age. To obtain religion that will save us in the presence of God, we must obtain the Holy Ghost, and in order to obtain the Holy Ghost we must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, then repent of our sins (that is, forsake them), then go forward and be immersed in water for the remission of sins, then receive the laying on of hands. But there is one thing which I have not noticed, and it is something of great importance. What I allude to is, that concerning the authority of administering the ordinance of baptism and laying on of hands. Unless they are administered by one who is actually sent of God the same blessings will not follow. The apostles and seventies were ordained by Jesus Christ to administer in the ordinances of the Gospel, through which the gifts and blessings of the eternal worlds were to be enjoyed. Hence Christ says to the apostles, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they shall be remitted ; and whosoever sins ye retain, they shall be retained ;" that is, every man that would come in humility, sincerely repenting of his sins, and receive baptism from the apostles, should have his sins forgiven through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, and through the laying on of hands should receive the Holy Ghost ; but those that would refuse receiving this order of things from the apostles would have their sins remain upon them. In view of this Paul says, "We are savours of life unto life, or of death unto death." He was a minister of life unto those who received the Gospel, which he had authority to administer ; but a minister of death to those refusing compliance. This power and authority of administering the Gospel was conferred upon others by the apostles, so that the apostles were not the only ones who held this responsible office. And every man, in every age, who holds the authority of administering the fulness of the Gospel becomes in this respect like the apostles, viz., a messenger of life unto life, or death unto death, according as his message shall be received or rejected. Now, until some one can be found that holds an office like this, some one having authority to baptize and lay hands on, no one is under any obligation to receive those ordinances, nor need he expect the blessings unless they have been administered legally.

It is very evident that the authority of administering in Gospel ordinances has been lost for many centuries ; for no man can have this authority except he receive it by direct revelation, either by the voice of God as Moses did, or by the ministering of angels, as John the Baptist received his message, or by the gift of prophecy, as Paul and Barnabas received theirs (Acts xiii, 2). Now, it is plain that men have denied immediate revelation for many hundred years past ; consequently have not received it, and, therefore, could not have been sent of God to administer in the fulness of the Gospel. God never sends a man on business except He reveal himself to that man—never sends a man with a message (in other words) unless He reveal that message to him in a

direct manner. The Church established by the apostles gradually fell away, wandered into the wilderness, and lost her authority (her priesthood), and, departing from the order of God, she lost also her gifts and graces; she transgressed the laws, and changed the ordinances of the Gospel; changed immersion into sprinkling, and quite neglected laying on of hands; despised prophecy, and disbelieved in signs following (Rev. xii, 6; Isaiah xxiv, 5). In consequence of this the Gentiles have been cut off from the fulness of Gospel privileges, as Paul said to them in Rom. xi, 22, "If you continue not in the goodness of God, you also shall be cut off."

John, in his Revelations, having seen and spoken of the wandering of the Church into darkness, and the beast, the Gentiles making war against the saints and overcoming them (xiii, 7), speaks, in chapter xiv, 5, 6, of the restoration of the Gospel: "I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth." So it is evident that prophecy was to be fulfilled at some time previous to our Saviour's second advent.

That those into whose hands this tract may fall shall be without excuse in the great and coming day of the Lord, I now bear testimony, having the highest assurance, by revelation from God, that this prophecy has already been fulfilled, that an angel from God has visited man in these last days, and restored that which has long been lost, even the priesthood—the keys of the kingdom, the fulness of the everlasting Gospel—and commanded men to cry, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him;" to call upon the wise virgins (Mat. xxv, 6) to arise from their slumber, be baptized for the remission of sins that they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and thereby "trim up their lamps," and thus be prepared to stand when the Bridegroom shall appear, for, saith Malachi iii, 2, "Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap." Answer, those that now repent of their sins and receive the message God is sending those that will forsake their false traditions, and come out from under the blighting and benighting influence of a hireling priesthood whom God has not sent, and with whom He is not well pleased. I say, and now bear testimony, in the name of Jesus Christ, that the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, has sent me to say unto you, Come out of her, O ye people of God, O ye wise virgins, or else you must partake of her iniquities, and you must receive of her plagues (Rev. xviii, 4). I say, in the name of Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost having borne witness, that the anger of God is kindled against the abominations, hypocrisy, and wickedness of the religious world, and from the heavens has He uttered his voice in anger against those who "divine for money and teach for hire;" and unless they speedily repent, and be baptized for the remission of their sins, receiving the message the Almighty is now sending unto all people, they will be destroyed by the brightness of the coming of the Son of Man, which is now at hand—even at your doors—O ye inhabitants of the earth!!!

The Latter-day Saints meet for public worship at

100 Sunday Services at 2 and 6 p.m.

Searchers after truth are cordially invited. Seats free.